NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF NAPOLEON.

MEMOIRS OF MADAME DE RÉMUSAT, 1802-1808. Edited, with a Preface and Notes, by her grandson, PAUL DE RÉMUSAT, Senator. Translated by Mrs. CASHEL HOEY and Mr. JOHN LILLIE. (Franklin Square Library.) Part I. 8vo. pp. 37. Harper & Brothers.

The author of these significant memoirs belonged to a family of distinguished position in French society prior to the Revolution of 1792. Her father, Charles Gravier de Vergennes, was a member of the legal profession and the incumbent of several public offices which he is said to have filled with fidelity and good sense. Madame de Rémusat was born in 1780, and was educated, after the fashion of the old régime, with a degree of strictness almost approaching austerity, being seldom permitted to see a play, but occasionally indulged with a visit to the opera, and now and then with a ball. M. de Vergennes, her father, was a victim of the Revolution, and died on the scaffold just three days before the fall of Robspierre, leaving his wife and daughters in very straitened circumstances, as his property had been confiscated by the National tribunals. After the publication of the decree commanding all nobles to leave Paris, the family retired into the country, and in due time the eldest daughter was married to M. de Rémusat, when she had scarcely arrived at the age of sixteen. She was a person of a highly sensitive and emotional nature, a vivid imagination, and a tendency to romantic impulses, but blended with a reflective turn of mind, and a rare devotion to duty. The sketch of her character written by her son, more than half a century after her marriage, describes a beautiful ideal of feminine dignity and worth: "She was not tall, but her figure was elegant and well-proportioned. She was fair and plump; indeed, it used to be feared that she would grow too fat. Her eyes were fine and expressive, black, like her hair; her features were regular, but rather too large. Her countenance was grave, almost imposing; but the intelligent kindliness of her glance tempered the gravity of her features very pleasantly. Her strong, well-trained, fertile intellect had certain virile qualities, with which the extreme vividness of her imagination frequently clashed. She possessed sound judgment and keen powers of observation, and she was entirely unaffected in her manners and in her modes of expression, although she was not without a certain subtlety of ideas. In reality, she was profoundly reasonable, but she was headstrong; her intellect was more reasonable than herself. In her youth she lacked gayety and probably ease; may have appeared to be pedantic because she was serious, affected because she was silent, absent-minded, and indifferent to all the small things of every-day life. But, with her mother, whose cheerful moods she sometimes crossed; with her husband, whose simple tastes and easy temper she never crossed, she was not wanting in richness and freedom. She had even a kind of gayety of her own, which developed as she grew older, when, having been very absent and absorbed in her own thoughts while she was very young, she became more like her mother, and often thought that if she had lived long enough to have shared the house in which I am writing to-day she would have been the merriest of us all."

The new married couple lived partly in Paris and partly in a modest country house at St. Gratien, a residence which was highly prized for the beauty of the landscape and the attraction of the neighborhood. Among their intimate friends was Mme. Josephine de Beauharnais, who became the wife of Bonaparte in 1796. Through her influence M. de Rémusat was appointed Prefect of the Palace in 1802, and soon after Mme. de Rémusat became lady-in-waiting to Mme. Bonaparte, with the title of Lady of the Palace. The officials thus installed made no sacrifice in casting in their lot with the new régime. They were at an equal distance from the extravagance of the Royalists and the fanaticism of the Republicans. Their motives in accepting the brilliant position are happily explained in a hitherto unpublished letter written by a son to M. Sainte-Beuve: "It was not as a *pis aller*, from necessity, weakness, or as a temporary expedient, that my parents attached themselves to the new régime. Of their free-will, and with entire confidence, they united themselves with its fortunes. If you add to that all the pleasures of an easy and prominent position, to be stepped into from one of poverty and obscurity, the curiosity which a Court of so novel a kind inspired, the incomparable interest of the spectacle of a man like the Emperor at an epoch when he was irreproachable, young, and still amiable, you can easily conceive the attraction which induced my parents to overlook all that was in reality opposed to their tastes, their reason, and even their true interests in this new position. At the end of two or three years, they had learned too well that a Court is always a Court, and that all is not pleasure in the personal service of an absolute master, even though he may charm and dazzle. But this did not prevent their being for a long time well enough satisfied with their lot. My mother especially was much amused with all that passed before her eyes, and she was on very good terms with the Empress, who was extremely kind and generous, while she enthusiastically admired the Emperor. He treated my mother with flattering distinction. She was almost the only woman with whom he ever talked." The character of M. de Rémusat, in his exceptional position as a courtier under Napoleon, appears to be faithfully depicted by the Editor of the Memoirs: "The position in which the favor of the First Consul had placed him did not suit him; he would, no doubt, have preferred some laborious administrative function to one which demanded nothing of him but suavity and a graceful demeanor. From the Memoirs, from his own letters, and from my father's account of him, we gather that M. de Rémusat was a man of discreet conduct, with keen wits, and a cheerful and even temper—not at all a person calculated to make enemies. Indeed, he would never have had any, but for a certain shyness, which, little as it seems to harmonize with conversational powers and an agreeable manner, is nevertheless occasionally allied with them. His taste for quiet life, and some indolence and timidity of character, had impelled him more and more toward retirement and isolation. Modesty and self-esteem mingled in his nature; and without rendering him insensible to the honors of the post which he had obtained, they sometimes made him ashamed of the solemn trifles to which that very post forced him to devote his life. He believed himself to be made for better things, but he did not care for toiling in search of that which did not come to him of itself. He took but little pleasure in expressing the art, in which he was probably not deficient, of managing men. He did not love to put himself forward, and his indolent temper induced him to let things take their chance. He afterward became a hard-working prefect, but he was a negligent and inactive courtier. He employed his skill simply to avoid disputes, and he discharged his official functions with quiet good taste. After having had many friends and entered into numerous relations, he let them drop through, or at least he never seemed to do anything to retain them. Unless great care be taken, ties are loosened, recollections are effaced, rivalries are formed, and all the chances of ambition escape one's grasp. M. de Rémusat had no skill in playing a part, forming connections, bringing people together, or contriving the opportunities of fortune or success. He seems never to have regretted this."

During her residence at Court, Mme. de Rémusat had been in the habit of taking daily notes of the events and conversations in which she was concerned while they were still fresh in her memory. She had recorded nearly everything she saw and heard at Paris, at St. Cloud, and at Malmaison. For twelve years she had transferred not only the passing incidents of the day, but studies of character and disposition to the pages of her journal, which was kept in the form of a correspondence. Upon the return of Napoleon from Elba, she feared that the record might compromise herself and her friends, and she threw her manuscript into the fire. She subsequently regarded this act with bitter regret, and endeavored, in some degree to replace the loss by the composition of the present Memoirs. They were written not as a literary pastime, or an exercise of fancy, but from a strong desire to present the truth on a most important period of modern history. Before the completion of the work, the health of Mme. de Rémusat began to fail; her eyesight became seriously impaired; but she continued her literary tasks; and no immediate danger was apprehended, when she suddenly expired on the 16th of December, 1821, at the age of forty-one.

The Memoirs commence with a lively description of the personal appearance and habits of Napoleon, in which the great Emperor is portrayed in darker colors than the traditional reports which have been incorporated in so many popular narratives:—

Napoleon Bonaparte is of low stature, and rather ill proportioned; his bust is too long, and so shortens the rest of his figure. He has thin chestnut hair, his eyes are grayish blue, and his skin, which was yellow while he was slight, became in later years a dead white, without any color. His forehead, the setting of his eye, the line of his nose—all that is beautiful, and reminds one of an antique medallion. His mouth, which is thin-lipped, becomes agreeable when he laughs; the teeth are regular. His chin is short, and his jaw heavy and square. He has well-formed hands and feet; I mention them particularly, because he thought a good deal of them.

He has a habitual slight stoop. His eyes are dull, giving his face when in repose a melancholy and meditative expression. When he is excited with anger his looks are fierce and menacing. Laughter becomes him; it makes him look more youthful and less formidable. It is difficult not to like him when he laughs, his countenance improves so much. He was always simple in his dress, and generally wore the uniform of his own guard. He was cleanly rather from habit than from a liking for cleanliness; he bathed often, sometimes in the middle of the night, because he thought the practice good for his health. But, apart from this, the precipitation with which he did everything did not admit of his clothes being put on carefully; and on gala days and full-dress occasions, his servants were obliged to consult together as to when they might snatch a moment to dress him.

He could not endure the wearing of ornaments; the slightest constraint was insupportable to him. He would tear off or break anything that gave him the least annoyance; and sometimes the poor valet who had occasioned him a passing inconvenience would receive violent proof of his anger. I have said there was a sort of fascination in the smile of Bonaparte; but, during all the time I was in the habit of seeing him, he rarely put forth that charm. Gravity was the foundation of his character—not the gravity of a dignified and noble manner, but that which arises from profound thought. In his youth he was a dreamer; later in life he became a moody, and later still, an habitually ill-tempered man. When I first began to know him well, he was exceedingly fond of all that induces reverie—Ossian, the twilight, melancholy music. I have seen him enraptured by the murmur of the wind; I have heard him talk with enthusiasm of the moaning of the sea; and he was tempted sometimes to believe that nocturnal apparitions were not beyond the bounds of possibility—in fact, he had a leaning to certain superstitions. When, on leaving the study in the evening, he went into Mme. Bonaparte's drawing-room, he would sometimes have the candles shaded with white gauze, desire us to keep profound silence, and amuse himself by telling or hearing ghost stories; or he would listen to soft, sweet music executed by Italian singers, accompanied only by a few instruments lightly touched. Then he would fall into a reverie which all respected, no one venturing to move or stir from his or her place. When he aroused himself from that state, which seemed to procure him a sort of repose, he was generally more serene and more communicative. He liked then to talk about the sensations he had experienced. He would explain the effect music had upon him; he always preferred that of Paesiello, because he said it was monotonous, and that impressions which repeat themselves are the only ones that take possession of us. The geometrical turn of his mind disposed him to analyze even his emotions. No man has ever meditated more deeply than Bonaparte on the "wherefore" that rules human actions. Always aiming at something even in the least important acts of his life, always laying bare to himself a secret motive for each of them, he could never understand that natural nonchalance which leads some persons to act without a project and without an aim. He always judged others by himself, and was often mistaken, his conclusions and the actions which ensued upon them both proving erroneous.

Bonaparte was deficient in education and in manners; it seemed as if he must have been destined either to live in a tent where all men are equal, or upon a throne where everything is permitted. He did not know how either to enter or to leave a room; he did not know how to make a bow, how to rise, or how to sit down. His questions were abrupt, and so also was his manner of speech. Spoken by him, Italian loses all its grace and sweetness. Whatever language he speaks, it seems always to be a foreign tongue to him; he appears to force it to express his thoughts. And then, as any rigid rule becomes an insupportable annoyance to him, every liberty which he takes pleases him as though it were a victory; and he would never yield even to grammar. He used to say that in his youth he had liked reading romances as well as studying the exact sciences, and probably he was influenced by so incongruous a mixture. Unfortunately, he had met with the worst kind of romances, and retained so keen a remembrance of the pleasure they had given him that when he married the Archduchess Marie Louise he gave her "Hippolyte, Comte de Douglas," and "Les Contemporains," so that, as he said, she might form an idea of refined feeling, and also of the customs of society.

The moral traits of Napoleon are depicted with a still less flattering pencil. The Emperor is represented as entirely destitute of loftiness of soul, though remarkable for certain intellectual qualities. He had no generosity, no true greatness. "I have never known him," says Mme. de Rémusat, "to admire, I have never known him to comprehend a fine action." He regarded every indication of good feeling with suspicion. He did not value sincerity. He often said that he recognized the superiority of a man by his skill in the art of lying:—

All Bonaparte's methods of government were selected from among those which have a tendency to debase men. He dreaded the ties of affection; he endeavored to isolate every one; he never sold a favor without awakening a sense of uneasiness, for he held that the true way to attach the recipients to himself was by compromising them, and often even by blasting them in public opinion. He could not pardon virtue until he had succeeded in weakening its effect by ridicule. He cannot be said to have truly loved glory, for he never hesitated to prefer success to it; thus, although he was audacious in good fortune, and although he pushed it to its utmost limits, he was timid and troubled when threatened with reverses. Of generous courage he was not capable; and, indeed, on that head one would hardly venture to tell the truth so plainly as he has told it himself, by an admission recorded in an anecdote which I have never forgotten. One day, after his defeat at Leipsic, and when, after he was about to return to Paris, he was occupied in collecting the remains of his army for the defence of our frontiers, he was talking to M. de Talleyrand of the ill success of the Spanish war, and of the difficulty in which it had involved him. He spoke openly of his own position—not with the noble frankness that does not fear to own a fault, but with that haughty sense of superiority which releases one from the necessity of dissimulation. At this interview, in the midst of his plain speaking, M. de Talleyrand said to him suddenly, "But how is it? You consult me as if we had not quarreled."

Bonaparte answered, "Ah, circumstances! circumstances! Let us leave the past and the future alone. I want to hear what you think of the present moment."

"Well," replied M. de Talleyrand, "there is only one thing you can do. You have made a mistake: you must say so—try to say so nobly. Proclaim, therefore, that being a King by the choice of the people, elected by the nations, it has never been your design to set yourself against them. Say that when you began the war with Spain, you believed you were about to deliver the people from the yoke of an odious minister, who was encouraged by the weakness of his prince; but that, on closer observation, you perceive that the Spaniards, although aware of the faults of their King, are none the less attached to his dynasty, which you are, therefore, about to restore to them, so that it may not be said you ever opposed a National aspiration. After that proclamation, restore King Ferdinand to liberty, and withdraw your troops. Such an avowal, made in a lofty tone, and when the enemy are still hesitating on our frontier, can only do you honor; and you are still too strong for it to be regarded as a cowardly act."

"A cowardly act!" replied Bonaparte; "what does that matter to me? Understand that I should not fail to commit one, if it were useful to me. In reality, there is nothing really noble or base in this world; I have in my character all that can contribute to secure my power, and to deceive those who think they know me. Frankly, I am base, essentially base. I give you my word that I should feel no repugnance to commit what would be called by the world a dishonorable action; my secret tendencies, which are, after all, those of nature, opposed to certain affectations of greatness with which I have to adorn myself, give me infinite resources with which to baffle every one. Therefore, all I have to do now is to consider whether your advice agrees with my present policy, and to try and find out, besides," he added (says M. de Talleyrand), with a satanic smile, "whether you have not some private interest in urging me to take this step."

Another anecdote which bears on the same characteristic will not be out of place here. Bonaparte, when on the point of setting out for Egypt, went to see M. de Talleyrand, then Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Directory. "I was in bed, being ill," said M. de Talleyrand. "Bonaparte sat down near me, and divulged to me all the dreams of his youthful imagination. I was interested in him because of the activity of his mind, and also on account of the obstacles which I was aware would be placed in his way by secret enemies of whom I knew. He told me of the difficulty in which he was placed for want of money, and that he did not know where to get any. 'Stay,' I said to him; 'open my desk. You will find there a hundred thousand francs which belong to me. They are yours for the present; you may repay the money when you return.' Bonaparte threw himself on my neck, and I was really delighted to witness his joy. When he became Consul he gave me back the money I had lent him; but he asked me one day, 'What interest could you have had in lending me that money? I have thought about it a hundred times since then, and have never been able to make out your object.' 'I had none,' I replied. 'I was feeling very ill; it was quite possible I might never see you again; but you were young, you had impressed me very strongly, and I felt impelled to render you a service without any afterthought whatsoever.' 'In that case,' said Bonaparte, 'and if it was really done without any design, you acted a dupe's part.'"

With regard to the emotional nature of Napoleon, Mme. de Rémusat observes, that if a being, similar to ourselves, could exist without the sentiment which makes us desire to love and be loved, she would think that in his creation the heart was left out. At all events he succeeded in compressing it completely. He was too much engrossed by himself to be influenced by any sentiment of affection. He almost ignored the ties of blood and the rights of nature, even to the sentiment of paternity:—

Notwithstanding his habitual hardness, Bonaparte was not entirely without experience in love. But, good heavens! what manner of sentiment was it in his case? A sensitive person forgets self in love, and becomes almost transformed; but to a man of the stamp of Bonaparte it only supplies an additional sort of despotism. The Emperor despised women, and contempt cannot exist together with love. He regarded their weakness as an unanswerable proof of their inferiority, and the power they have acquired in society as an intolerable usurpation—a result and an abuse of the progress of that civilization which, as M. de Talleyrand said, was always his personal enemy. On this account Bonaparte was under restraint in the society of women; and as every kind of restraint put him out of humor, he was always awkward in their presence, and never knew how to talk to them. It is true that the women with whom he was acquainted were not calculated to change his views of the sex. We may easily imagine the nature of his youthful experiences. In Italy morals were utterly depraved, and the general licentiousness was augmented by the presence of the French army. When he returned to France society was entirely broken up and dispersed. The circle that surrounded the Directory was a corrupt one, and the Parisian women to whose society he was admitted were vain and frivolous, the wives of men of business and contractors. When he became Consul, and made his generals and his aides-de-camp marry, or ordered them to bring their wives to Court, the only women he had about him were timid and silent girls, newly married, or the wives of his former comrades, suddenly withdrawn from obscurity by the good fortune of their husbands, and ill able to conform to the change in their position.

I am disposed to believe that Bonaparte, almost always exclusively occupied by politics, was never awakened to love except by vanity. He thought nothing of a woman except while she was beautiful, or at least young. He would probably have been willing to subscribe to the doctrine that, in a well-organized country, we should be killed—just as certain kinds of insects are destined by nature to a speedy death so soon as they have accomplished the task of maternity. Yet Bonaparte had some affection for his first wife, and if he was ever really stirred by any emotion, it was by her and for her. Even a Bonaparte cannot completely escape from every influence, and a man's character is composed, not of what he is always, but of what he is most frequently.

Bonaparte was young when he first made the acquaintance of Mme. de Beauharnais, who was greatly superior to the rest of the circle in which she moved, both by reason of the name she bore and from the elegance of her manners. She attached herself to him, and flattered his pride; she procured him a step in rank; he became accustomed to associate the idea of her influence with every piece of good fortune which befell him. This superstition, which she kept up very cleverly, exerted great power over him for a long time; it even induced him more than once to delay the execution of his projects of divorce. When he married Mme. de Beauharnais, Bonaparte believed that he was allying himself to a very great lady; his marriage, therefore, was one conquest the more. I shall give further details of the charm she exercised over him when I have to speak more particularly of her.

Notwithstanding his preference for her, I have seen him in love two or three times, and it was on these occasions that he exhibited the full measure of the despotism of his character. How irritated he became at the least obstacle! How roughly he put aside the jealous remonstrances of his wife! "It is your place," he said, "to submit to all my fancies, and you ought to think it quite natural that I should allow myself amusements of this kind. I have a right to answer all your complaints by an eternal I. I am a person apart; I will not be dictated to by any one." But he soon began to desire to exercise over the object of his passing preference an authority equal to that by which he silenced his wife. Astonished that any one should have any ascendancy over him, he speedily became angry with the audacious individual, and he would abruptly get rid of the object of his brief passion, having let the public into the transparent secret of his success.

Mme. de Rémusat does not hesitate to acknowledge that the intellect of Napoleon was extraordinary. It would be difficult, she remarks, to find among men a more powerful or a more comprehensive mind. He owed nothing to education; in reality he was ignorant; he read but little, and that with haste. But he quickly seized upon the little he learned, and it was forced to such a magnitude by his imagination that he might easily have passed for a well-educated man. With him one idea gave birth to a thousand, and a word would lift his conversation into the high regions of fancy, in which his intellect never failed to shine:—

It was always a great pleasure to me to hear him talk, or rather to hear him hold forth, for his conversation was composed generally of long monologues; not that he objected to replies when he was in a good-humor, but, for many reasons, it was not always easy to answer him. His Court, which for a long time was entirely military, listened to his least word with the respect that is paid to the word of command; and afterward it became so numerous that any individual undertaking to refute him, or to carry on a dialogue with him, felt like an actor before an audience. I have said that he spoke badly, but his language was generally animated and brilliant; his grammatical inaccuracies sometimes lent his sentences an unexpected strength, very suitable to the originality of his ideas. He required no interlocutor to warm him up. He would dash into a subject, and go on for a long time, careful to notice, however, whether he was followed, and pleased with those who comprehended and applauded him. Formerly, to know how to listen to him was a sure and easy way of pleasing him. Like an actor who becomes excited by the effect he produces, Bonaparte enjoyed the admiration he watched for closely in the faces of his audience. I remember well how, because he interested me very much when he spoke, and I listened to him with pleasure, he proclaimed me a woman of intellect, although at that time I had not addressed two consecutive sentences to him.

He was very fond of talking about himself, and criticised himself on certain points, just as another person might have done. Rather than fail to make the most out of his own character, he would not have hesitated to subject it to the most searching analysis. He used often to say that a real politician knows how to calculate even the smallest profits that he can make out of his defects; and M. de Talleyrand carried that reflection even farther. I once heard him say, "That devil of a man deceives one on all points. His very passions mislead, for he manages to dissemble them even when they really exist." I can recall an incident which will show how, when he found it useful, he could pass from the most complete calm to the most violent anger.

A little while before our last rupture with England, a rumor was spread that war was about to recommence, and that the ambassador, Lord Whitworth, was preparing to leave Paris. Once a month the First Consul was in the habit of receiving, in Mme. Bonaparte's apartments, the ambassadors and their wives. This reception was held with great pomp. The foreigners were ushered into a drawing-room, and when they were all there the First Consul would appear, accompanied by his wife. Both were attended by a prefect and a lady of the palace. To each of them the ambassadors and their wives were introduced by name. Mme. Bonaparte would take a seat, the First Consul would keep up the conversation for a longer or a shorter time, according to his convenience, and then withdraw with a slight bow. A few days before the breach of the peace, the Corps Diplomatique had met as usual at the Tuileries. While they were waiting, I went to Mme. Bonaparte's apartment, and entered the dressing-room, where she was finishing her toilet.

The First Consul was sitting on the floor, playing with little Napoleon, the eldest son of his brother Louis. He presently began to criticise his wife's dress, and also mine, giving us his opinion on every detail of our costume. He seemed to be in the best possible humor. I remarked this, and said to him that, judging by appearances, the letters the ambassadors would have to write, after the approaching audience, would breathe nothing but peace and concord. Bonaparte laughed, and went on playing with his little nephew.

By-and-by he was told that the company had arrived. Then he rose quickly, the gaiety vanished from his face, and I was struck by the severe expression that suddenly replaced it; he seemed to grow pale at will, his features contracted; and all this in less time than it takes me to describe it. "Let us go, mesdames," said he, in a troubled voice; and then he walked on quickly, entered the drawing-room, and, without bowing to any one, advanced to the English ambassador. To him he began to complain bitterly of the proceedings of his Government. His anger seemed to increase every minute; it soon reached a height which terrified the assembly; the hardest words, the most violent threats, were poured forth by his trembling lips. No one dared to move. Mme. Bonaparte and I looked at each other, dumb with astonishment, and every one trembled. The impassibility of the Englishman was even disconcerted, and it was with difficulty he could find words to answer.

Previous to her appointment at the Court of the First Consul, Mme. de Rémusat had led a singularly quiet life, engrossed with her domestic pleasures, and with little taste for the excitements of gay and fashionable life. She was suddenly taken from this peaceful solitude to act a conspicuous part in the great world. Though she never entered into the spirit of the Court, she was a shrewd observer of the glittering routine. She found Napoleon devoured by pride and the passion for social display. Every day he introduced some novelty into his manner of life, in order to increase the resemblance of his abode to the palace of a sovereign. All who surrounded him were obliged to submit to the burden of ceremony. He believed that the French were attracted by gorgeous displays. His own dress was extremely simple, but he required his officers to wear magnificent uniforms. He received his Ambassadors with the usual pomp of majesty, and always appeared in public attended by a numerous guard. The family life, so to speak, of the palace is described with some length of detail by the author:—

It was in the Autumn of 1802 that I established myself for the first time at Saint Cloud, where the First Consul then was. There were four ladies, and we each passed a week in succession in attendance on Mme. Bonaparte. The service, as it was called, of the prefects of the palace, of the generals of the guard, and of the aides-de-camp, was conducted in the same way. Duroc, the Governor of the Palace, lived at Saint Cloud; he kept the household in perfect order; we dined with him. The First Consul took his meals alone with his wife. Twice a week he invited some members of the Government; once a month he gave a great dinner to a hundred guests at the Tuileries, in the Gallery of Diana; after these dinners he received every one who held an important post or rank, either military or civil, and also foreigners of note. During the Winter of 1803 we were still at peace with England. A great number of English people came to Paris, and as we were not accustomed to seeing them, they excited great curiosity.

At these brilliant receptions there was a great display of luxury. Bonaparte liked women to dress well, and either from policy or from taste he encouraged his wife and sisters to do so. Mme. Bonaparte and Mmes. Bacciochi and Murat (Mme. Leclerc, afterward Princess Pauline, was at Saint Domingo in 1802) were always magnificently attired. Costumes were given to the different corps; the uniforms were rich; and this pomp, coming as it did after a period in which the affectation of squalor had been combined with that of extravagant *cynisme*, seemed to be an additional guarantee against the return of that fatal *régime* which was still remembered with dread.

Bonaparte's costume at this period is worthy of record. On ordinary days he wore one of the uniforms of his guard; but he had decreed, for himself and his two colleagues, that on all occasions of grand ceremonial each should wear a red coat, made in Winter of velvet, in Summer of some other material, and embroidered in gold. The two Consuls, Cambacérès and Lebrun, elderly, powdered, and well set up, wore this gorgeous coat with lace, ruffles, and a sword, after the old fashion of full dress; but Bonaparte, who detested all such adornments, got rid of them as much as possible. His hair was cut short, smoothed down, and generally ill arranged. With his crimson-and-gold coat he would wear a black cravat, a lace frill to his shirt, but no sleeve-ruffles. Sometimes he wore a white vest embroidered in silver, but more frequently his uniform waistcoat, his uniform sword, breeches, silk stockings, and boots. This extraordinary costume and his small stature gave him the oddest possible appearance, which, however, no one ventured to ridicule. When he became Emperor, he wore a richly laced coat, with a short cloak and a plumed hat; and this costume became him very well. He also wore a magnificent collar of the Order of the Legion of Honor, in diamonds, on state occasions; but on ordinary occasions he wore only the silver cross.

On the eve of his coronation, the Marshals he had newly created a few months before came to pay him a visit, all gorgeously arrayed. The splendor of their costume, in contrast with his simple uniform, made him smile. I was standing at a little distance from him, and as he saw that I smiled also, he said to me in a low tone, "It is not every one who has the right to be plainly dressed." Presently the Marshals of the army began disputing among themselves about the great question of precedence. Their pretensions were very well founded, and each enumerated his victories. Bonaparte, while listening to them, again glanced at me. "I think," said I, "you must have stamped your foot on France, and said, 'Let all the vanities arise from the soil.'" "That is true," he replied; "but it is fortunate that the French are to be ruled through their vanity."

During the first months of my sojourn at Saint Cloud in the Winter, and at Paris, my life was very pleasant. In the morning at eight o'clock Bonaparte left his wife's room and went to his study. When we were in Paris he again went down to her apartments to breakfast; at Saint Cloud he breakfasted alone, generally on the terrace. While at breakfast he received artists and actors and talked to them freely and pleasantly. Afterward he devoted himself to public affairs until six o'clock. Mme. Bonaparte remained at home during the morning, receiving an immense number of visitors, chiefly women. Among these would be some whose husbands belonged to the Government, and some (these were called *de l'ancien régime*) who did not wish to have, or to appear to have, relations with the First Consul, but who solicited through his wife "erasures" or restitutions. Mme. Bonaparte received them all with perfect grace. She promised everything, and sent every one away well pleased. The petitions were put aside and lost sometimes, but then they brought fresh ones, and she seemed never tired of listening.

We dined at six in Paris; at Saint Cloud we went out to drive at that hour—the Consul alone in a *calèche* with his wife, we in other carriages. Bonaparte's brothers and sisters and Eugène de Beauharnais might come to dine with him whenever they wished to do so. Sometimes Mme. Louis came, but she never slept at Saint Cloud. The jealousy of Louis Bonaparte, and his extreme suspicion, had already made her shy and melancholy. Once or twice a week the little Napoleon (who afterward died in Holland) was sent to Saint Cloud. Bonaparte seemed to love that child; he built hopes for the future upon him. Perhaps it was only on account of those hopes that he noticed him; for M. de Talleyrand has told me that when the news of his nephew's death reached Berlin, Bonaparte, who was about to appear in public, was so little affected that Mme. de Talleyrand said, "You forget that a death has occurred in your family, and that you ought to look serious." "I do not amuse myself," replied Bonaparte, "by thinking of dead people."

It would be curious to compare this frank utterance with the fine speech of M. de Fontanes, who, having to deliver an address upon the depositing of the Prussian flags in great pomp at the Invalides, dwelt pathetically upon the majestic grief of a conqueror who turned from the splendor of his victories to shed tears over the death of a child.

After the Consul had dined, we were told we might go up-stairs again. The conversation was prolonged, according as he was in a good or a bad humor. He would go away after awhile, and in general we did not see him again. He returned to work, gave some particular audience or received one of the ministers, and retired early. Mme. Bonaparte played at cards in the evening. Between ten and eleven o'clock she would be told, "Madame, the First Consul has gone to his room," and then she would dismiss us for the night.

The character of Napoleon as exhibited by Mme. de Rémusat presents an extraordinary instance of the supremacy of egoism in the individual composition, to the exclusion of the nobler sentiments. There is no more conspicuous example recorded in history of the domination of selfishness over the moral nature. Of the elements of civil and social unity Napoleon appears to have been utterly destitute. Nor did he give any visible sign of the power of conscience. Instead of recognizing the idea of right and wrong as an essential growth of the human mind in its highest development, the terms to him were empty and unmeaning words. His own will was the supreme law, the indulgence of his own passions the ultimate end. It would not be correct to say that he was an imperfect creation, that his moral sense was left in the germ which, if normally unfolded, would have shown a generous fruitage; the principle of right, of duty, of conscience was omitted from his constitution; and there was found in its place only an obscene and loathsome worship of selfish passions. His nature was not the acorn, which beneath a more genial sky and surrounded by a sweeter atmosphere would have grown into the majestic oak; its type was rather the poisonous hemlock and the fatal nightshade, which blighted everything which they touched and transformed the sources of life into the fountains of death. The character of Napoleon was not deficient in quantity, but was pestilent in quality. Compared with Washington and Lincoln, whose fame spreads a white and radiant light for the guidance of nations, the glory of Napoleon is a lurid meteor, which sinks to the ground and disappears in darkness and corruption.

THE PORTFOLIO. An Artistic Periodical, edited by PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON. New-York: J. W. Bouton, 706 Broadway.

The Portfolio for December comes up to the goal of the New Year fresh and smiling, with interesting and instructive text, and with three fine etchings—one from Rembrandt, "Portrait of Himself," one from Raeburn, "Portrait of Mrs. Scott-Moncrieff," and one from another Scotch artist of our time, Mr. David Law, "Whitby Harbor." The industrious editor gives us an account of Mr. Law's experience as an artist, which deserves to be pondered, as showing how a talent for art may be profitably developed, while one is dutifully busied with the labors of a profession seemingly thoroughly opposed to artistic studies. Just as our own Professor Ogden N. Rood has made himself an accomplished artist in water colors—few better in the country—while engaged in the laborious duties of his professorship, so Mr. Law has developed most striking powers as an etcher while plodding for twenty years in the office of the British Ordnance Survey. The example of his skill here given is rather too black in places, but this is owing to the printing—the bane of etchers. Mr. Hamerton continues his "Notes on Æsthetics," in which his orderly and sensible mind is found dealing with certain interesting problems in a way that is neither new nor profound perhaps, but so clear that the wayfaring man though a fool cannot err therein. His subjects for this month are Idiosyncrasy—a continuation of last month's paper, and a branch of the same theme, Idiosyncrasy and the Choice of Process. Mr. Alexander Fraser gives a succinct account of Sir Henry Raeburn's life, which, though interesting, is not so complete as that given in Cunningham's Lives. It is, however, enlivened by some racy anecdotes. *The Art Chronicle* is full and well selected, the chief article being an account of the late Viollet-le-Duc. The fac-simile of Rembrandt's etched portrait of himself leaning on a wall, is an admirable specimen of the Heliogravure process of Amand-Durand, and the etching by C. O. Murray, after Raeburn's portrait of Mrs. Scott-Moncrieff, is a good and striking work in spite of the blackness of the shadows.

THE ETCHER. A Magazine of the Etched Work of Artists. New-York: J. W. Bouton, 706 Broadway.

The Etcher for November is more interesting than some of the late numbers have been. The subjects of the plates are "The Tin Ghaut, Whitby," by David Law, of whose work in *The Portfolio* we have spoken elsewhere; "Sunning Themselves," by H. R. Robertson, and "Rotherhithe," by W. J. Cooper. The plates in *The Etcher* are much better printed than those in *The Portfolio*—the "Rembrandt" excepted—and Mr. Law will be found by many more intelligible in this scene from Whitby, than in the "Whitby Harbor" of *The Portfolio*. It is, however to, our thinking, a less interesting subject and less poetically treated. The subject of "Sunning Themselves"—"two old codgers long past work, who have met at a sunny corner of the street to warm the feeble blood in their veins"—reminds us, and its treatment as well, of our own Magrath. The "Rotherhithe" of Mr. Cooper is entirely uninteresting, though it is a subject in which Whistler would have delighted and which he would have made as poetic as Venice. As we said last month, the plan of *The Etcher* is a good one, but it is carried out in a rather feeble manner.

ODD DINNER CUSTOMS IN SWEDEN.

From All the Year Round.

The Swedes have a queer way of locomotion at their meals. They often flit about like flies, from one table to another, and sometimes seem to turn the menu topsy-turvy when they order a repast. It is no rare thing to see them begin with cheese and biscuit, next proceed to ham and salad, with a slice of meat to follow, and then suddenly start up in the middle of their dinner to swallow, while they walk about, a plateful of pea soup. A habit which they have of beginning each repast with what they call a "smorgos," not merely leads to much untidiness at meal-time, but makes them seem contented to live on bits and scraps. The smorgos consists of little dishes, such as slices of smoked reindeer, and caviar, and sardines, with pickles, cheese, and other whets provocative of thirst. These are fished out with a fork of general utility, and laid on thumb pieces of rye cake, thickly smeared with butter, which serve by way of plate. Then they are bitten into, regardless of the fragments which may fall on other dainties (for your true smörgos eater seldom sits to his repast), and they are finally washed down with a glass or two of spirits which stand handy by their side. Such a prelude to a meal is not merely uncleanly, but must vitiate the palate, and injure the digestion. Indeed, I feel convinced that, were the smörgosbord abolished, not merely would the cookery in Sweden soon improve, but very many of the people would be gradually weaned from their weakness for strong drink.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

HISTORY OF THE SACRED VOLUME.

THE COMPILATION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS—SEPTUAGINT AND VULGATE—EARLY ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS AND THE AUTHORIZED VERSION—EDITIONS NAMED FROM THEIR BLUNDERS—TYPOGRAPHICAL MISTAKES.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: At this time, when the revision of the authorized version of the Scriptures is engaging the attention of some of the ripest and best known Biblical scholars on both sides of the Atlantic, it will not be out of season to give a brief account of the sacred volume, whose history, from the earliest times down to our own day, is a long series of curious and interesting facts and narratives. Moreover, it behooves English-speaking men and women to be familiar with the chief points in the history of that Book, whose growth into its present shape is inseparably connected with the development of the English tongue, and, it may also be said, with the undoubted supremacy among the nations of the English-speaking races.

It was not until the fifth century that the collective name, *Ta Biblia*, "the books," which originally signified, both in Latin and Greek, the inner bark of trees used for making papyrus, and from which our word Bible is derived, was conferred by St. Chrysostom upon all those writings which we now recognize and believe in as containing all that has been revealed to us by God of His divine will and plan of government. In the Old Testament we find the sacred writings referred to as "the Law, the Prophets, and the other books," in the New Testament as "the Law and the Prophets," and "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms." It is worthy of note that the "Bible" does not appear in Anglo-Saxon literature, and it is not known precisely when it was first used; but the use of it rather than any other term by the great translators Wycliffe, Luther, and Coverdale gave it a place in our language beyond all possibility of change; and there can be no doubt that standing for "*The Book*" it is peculiarly adapted to the high use to which it has been put.

When the Jews, by virtue of the decree of Cyrus, returned from the Babylonish captivity, about 535 B. C., King Ezra collected, or caused to be collected, and arranged in chronological order, all the sacred writings then known to him, dividing the whole into three parts: the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. The first division embraced the first five books of Moses, otherwise called the Pentateuch; the second contained the books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth, Samuel I. and II., Kings I. and II., Chronicles I. and II., Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Lamentations, and the writings of the twelve minor prophets; the Hagiographa ("sacred writings") included the Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes, making the number of books correspond to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet—twenty-two. Josephus, the great historian of the Jews, refers as follows to this arrangement, as well as to the Divine authority and character of the books themselves: "We have not thousands of books discordant, but we have only twenty-two which comprehend the history of all former ages, and are justly regarded as divine. Five of them proceed from Moses; they include as well the laws as an account of the creation of man, extending to the time of his (Moses's) death. This period comprehends nearly 3,000 years. From the death of Moses to that of Artaxerxes, who was king of Persia after Xerxes, the prophets who succeeded Moses committed to writing in thirteen books what was done in their days. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and instructions of life for man." This treble division of the Scriptures was also recognized by Christ, and expressly acknowledged by New Testament writers before the time of Josephus. The earliest reference to it is believed to be that of Aristobulus, who lived in the second century before Christ.

Between the completion of the Old Testament by Malachi, and the commencement of the New, there elapsed about 450 years. About the time of Christ a translation of the Pentateuch was made into Aramaic, a language with which the Jews, in their captivities, had become familiar, and which, in Christ's day, was the common tongue of the Jews, almost to the total exclusion of Hebrew. The cradle of this Aramaic language was in the plains of Babylonia and Chaldea, but by the course of conquest and other political events, it had gradually spread from the Tigris to the Mediterranean, and in a contrary direction from Armenia to Arabia. At this day, however, it survives as a living tongue only among a small tribe of Christians in the vicinity of Mogul. Subsequently other portions of the Scriptures were translated into this Aramæan tongue, such translations being called *Targums*, and being ten in number.

We now come to the most important of all the versions of the Old Testament—that of the Septuagint, in Greek, so-called because, as the story goes, seventy or seventy-two learned Jews were engaged upon it for seventy-two days. This, upon which our Authorized Version is founded, is justly regarded as the most trustworthy translation of the original Hebrew we have. The work is said, by Aristeas, a courtier at Alexandria, to have been begun by authority of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 280 B. C., who, wishing to procure a correct copy of the Hebrew Scriptures for the library he had founded at Alexandria, sent to Jerusalem and obtained the services of seventy-two learned Jews, six from each of the twelve tribes, skilled in Greek and Hebrew, to whom he intrusted the compilation of all the laws of their nation. These scholars were secluded in the Island of Pharos, where the librarian of the King took down their version as they rendered it to him, accomplishing the work in seventy-two days. Whatever the differences of opinion among critics as to the time and manner of the Septuagint translation, there is but scanty doubt as to its validity, as well from its own internal evidences as from the fact that in the time of Christ it was quoted as an authority both by Him and by the Apostles.

The compilation of the New Testament, which was spread over a period of nearly one hundred years, was the work of six of the Apostles, and two of the disciples who attended them in their journeyings. The four Gospels were the work of men who were contemporary with Christ; the first of them was published a few years after his ascension, and circulated among the very people in whose midst his life was passed. The Epistles were written separately by five of the Apostles, from fifteen to thirty-five years after the Saviour left this earth. The history known as the Acts of the Apostles was published about the year 65 A. D. The Book of Revelation was written and made known by John, one of the five above referred to, about the year 96 A. D., and though Martin Luther, among others equally eminent, doubted that John really wrote it, the weight of modern critical opinion is certainly in favor of his authorship.

There were several early Latin versions founded on the Septuagint, the best known of which is the *Vetus Itala*, which in the fourth century was revised by Jerome, but he afterward translated the Old Testament from the original Hebrew, following the Septuagint to a great extent. This version is what is known as the Vulgate and has for centuries been the standard of the Church of Rome, though it has several times undergone revision by command of various Popes. The Vulgate, is also remarkable because it was the first book printed with movable types, by Gutenberg at Mayence, somewhere between the years 1450 and 1455.

Cædmon, a Benedictine monk, who flourished in the seventh century, is believed to have been the first who rendered any part of the Bible into the English vernacular of his time. But there were also numerous paraphrases and translations by others, as for instance the Venerable Bede, in 735, and Alfred the Great, all clearing the way somewhat for the more complete and perfect works of which Wycliffe's Bible, in 1380, was the pioneer. His was the first translation of the entire Scriptures into English, and was made from the Vulgate. The entire New Testament and the latter part of the Old was his work; the remainder was translated by his friend and co-laborer, Nicholas de Hereford. After an interval of a century and a half, Wycliffe's Bible was followed by Tyndal's Bible, in 1530; Coverdale's, 1537; Matthew's, 1539; Taverner's, 1539; the Great Bible, first edition, 1539; Whittingham's New Testament, 1557; the Geneva Bible, 1560, published at the city whose name it bears by a number of English divines who had taken refuge there from persecution at home. It was the first English Bible printed in Roman type, and also the first one in which the text was divided into verses, and in which words supplied by the translators were put in italics. After this came the Bishop's Bible, 1568, the work, as its name indicates, of a number of bishops of the Church of England, in the reign of Elizabeth.

All these translations and revisions were only finally discarded, among Protestants at least, in favor of what has since been known as "The Authorized Version," though, strange to say, notwithstanding its frequent announcement as such, this particular translation was never "authorized" by king, council, or parliament; nor is it known whether the words "Appointed to be read in churches" were affixed by any authority save that of either the printer or bookseller as a mere trade device. This version was the result of the labors of fifty-four learned men, the names of forty-seven of whom only are now known, and was not, strictly speaking, a "translation," but rather a collation of all that had gone before. These men were appointed in 1604, by King James I., but for some cause unknown did not commence their labors until three years after that, and in the interval some changes in their number were rendered necessary by death and other causes. The translators were divided into six companies, and the work portioned among them, and the separate portions were afterward submitted to the entire body for approval. A set of fifteen rules was drawn up for their guidance by the King's command, and the expense was borne, not by the King, but by contributions from the Bishops and others interested in the work. The style of the version is peculiar, and it has been asserted that the revisers did not use "the actual current book language nor the colloquial speech of the English people." Be that as it may, the fact remains that is was the first really authentic and trustworthy translation into the English vernacular, and one that, from the favor with which it was received, was, in the best sense of the word, "authorized." It appeared in 1611, in a single folio volume, printed in black letter, and with the following title:

The | HOLY | BIBLE | Conteyning the Old Testament, | AND THE NEW, | Newly translated out of the Originall | tongues: & with the former translations diligently compared and revised by his | Maiesties speciall Commandment. | Appointed to be read in Churches. | Imprinted at London by Robert | Barker, Printer to the King's most excellent Maiestie | Anno Dom. 1611.

The first manuscript New Testament in English was that of Wycliffe, 1380, which was followed two years after by the first MS. Old Testament. The first printed New Testament was Tyndale's, Cologne and Worms, 1525-26. The first printed Bible was that of Coverdale, Antwerp, 1535. The Seven Penitential Psalms was the first portion of Scripture printed in England, 1505, and the first Bible printed in England was that of Coverdale, Southwark, 1537. The first book of any kind printed in America was the "Bay Psalm Book," Cambridge, Mass., 1640, and the first Bible printed in America and having an American imprint was an edition of the Authorized Version, bearing date Philadelphia, 1782.

On account of the queer rendering, or rather misrendering of some particular word or phrase, many Bibles have come to be known and designated by these peculiarities. For instance, we have the "Breeches Bible," the "Rosin Bible," and the "Bug Bible." The foundation for the last-named lies in the fact that in the passage, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the *terror* by night," Psalm xci. 5, the word *terror* is rendered, in a certain edition, "bugges." In the first of the above three instances, Adam and Eve are said to have made for themselves *breeches* of fig-leaves; and in the other instance, which was a Douay Bible, by the way, the word *balm* in the passage, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" is rendered "rosin."

An entire article might be given to an account of the typographical errors alone that have from time to time disfigured the sacred text. Printers and proof-readers are only poor mortals liable to err, as many an author knows to his sorrow, but it is nevertheless difficult to understand how such a mistake could arise as gave to a Cambridge edition published so lately as 1805 the title of the "to remain Bible." The editor wrote on the margin of the proof the words "to remain," with reference to a comma which the printer thought should be taken out. The latter, however, settled any doubts he may have had on the subject by inserting the two words, so that the entire passage was made to read: "Persecuted him that was born after the spirit, *to remain* even so it is now." A scarcely less ridiculous blunder, but a far more serious one, occurred in what was in consequence of it called the "Wicked Bible," published in London in 1631. In this case the word *not* was left out of the seventh commandment. This awful error was pointed out to Charles I., who fined the printer £300—a small fortune in those days—and caused the entire edition to be destroyed. In another London edition of the Authorized Version, 1653, 1 Cor. vi., 9, reads: "Know ye not that the *un*-righteous shall inherit the kingdom of Heaven?" Other mistakes have been perpetrated of a character somewhat more ludicrous than impious. Thus, Cotton Mather mentions a Bible in which David (Psalms, xix., 161) makes the startling assertion that "*Printers* have persecuted me without a cause;" and in yet another of this class of errors we have "Blessed are the *place*-makers," instead of peace-makers, a beatitude that might easily serve as the creed of a large class in this land of ours.

But the day when such a multiplication of errors was possible is now, happily, long passed, and the Holy Scriptures are probably among the best examples of the printer's accuracy. And although the best biblicists both in England and America are now engaged in the revision of the sacred text, it is simply because it is believed, and justly, that many passages may, in the additional light which modern research has thrown upon sacred subjects, be given a better rendering than it was possible they could receive at the hands of men who, although the ripest scholars of their day, yet labored and wrote in the comparative darkness of from 200 to 400 years ago. HENRY F. REDDALL.

New-York, Dec. 20, 1879.

GERMAN SCHOOL-BOY LIFE.

From "Germany Past and Present," by S. B. Gould.

They grow up to live in worlds of their own creation, in ideas and theories which are not brought to the test of practical experience. It is the "faculty" of common sense, which is cultivated with distinguished success in our playgrounds, which redeems the English schools from the sentence of utter badness which they would otherwise deserve. And it is the absence of this "faculty" in the German prospectus which vitiates so much of the excellent teaching imparted. Better give the pupils a good playground and confine them daily for three hours within its barriers than seat them for the same time before a blackboard to study the theory of political economy. German boys have no public games. All their energies are used up in their studies. They take no violent exercise except on the ice in Winter. School work is exhausting, and it takes all their energies out of them. In it they do take an interest. And the reason—or one principal reason—why they do so is because from early childhood it is impressed on them that their whole future depends on it. The *Abiturienten-Examen* is the Day of Judgment looming before the children's eyes, and their childish life is a solemn march to that *Dies iræ*. At the close of youth, before entering on manhood, comes the terrible day which irrevocably fixes their fate. Unless they issue from that examination with a testimonial of "ripeness," every learned profession is closed to them, and three years' military drill instead of one is their doom. As the boy goes to school he passes the barrack yard or the *Platz* where the recruits are drilling. He sees them posturing, goose-stepping, tumbling, fencing, marching, in mud or snow, and he thinks, "I shall have three years of this unless I work," and it acts as a daily stimulus to exertion.

A FRIENDLY HINT.—Willum: "Not quite so active as you was twenty years ago, Tammas." Tummas: "No, I baint, Willum; I find I carnt run up a score lately, but if onybody askes me to 'ave a drink, I jumps at the hoffer."—[Fun.

A young lady was sitting with a gallant captain in a charmingly-decorated recess. On her knee was a diminutive niece. In the adjoining room, with the door open, were the rest of the company. Said the little niece, in a jealous and very audible voice, "Auntie, kiss me too." Evidently something had just happened. "You should say twice, Ethel dear; two is not grammar," was the immediate rejoinder.